The Conqueror Crown'd.

A Funeral Sermon

On Occasion of the

DEATH

OF THE

Late Reverend and Learned Divine, Mr. *Edward Veel.*

Who Departed this Life *June* the 6*th*, 1708. in the LXXVI'th Year of his Age.

PREACH'D

At St. *John Wapping*, *June* the 13*th*, 1708.

By Thomas Simmons.

Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life, Rev. II. 10.

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The CONQUEROR *Crown'd.*

2 Tim. IV. 7, 8.

I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord the Righteous Judge ſhall give me at that Day: And not to me only, but unto all them alſo, that love his appearing.

THE Chriſtian's preſent State is a State of Warfare; he has powerful Enemies to oppoſe and conquer: The *Fleſh*, the *World*, and the *Devil:* But in this Warfare, as he wants not *Aſſiſtance*; ſo neither *Encouragement*, if he be faithful in it. He won't only gain the *Victory*, but obtain a *Crown:* Nay, tho' he dies in the Conflict, he ſha'nt loſe his Reward. Thoſe that *loved not their Lives unto Death*, yet they *overcame in the Blood of the Lamb*, Rev. 12. 11. So our Apoſtle, whoſe *Departure was at hand, and ready to be offered up*; he was but haſtning to Glory; He ſhou'd not loſe his Crown. *Henceforth, &c.* Death (tho' an Enemy to Na-

ture) he doth not encounter it under the Notion; He ſpeaks of it without Horror and tho' it was to be a violent *Death*, under that bloody and cruel Perſecutor *Nero* he doth not accoſt it with a *Puſilanimity* of Soul, *Haſt thou found me, O mine Enemy?* but with an holy *Magnanimity*, and undaunted *Courage*, he entertains the Proſpect and Approaches of it: And the Reaſon of this Chriſtian Courage and Bravery of Soul you have in the Words of the Text; where you find that *his Work was done*, and *his Reward was at hand.*

1. *His Work was done:*

And this appears in Three Particulars. (The Explication whereof we ſhall leave 'till afterwards.)

He had fought a good Fight,
He had finiſhed his Courſe,
He had kept the Faith.

And he that can ſay all this, need not be afraid of Death; No more than a labouring Man wearied out with the Toils and Fatigues of the Day, ſhou'd be loth to undreſs, and go to Reſt at Night. What's dying to the Saint? It is but undreſſing. *A putting off our cloathing of Fleſh, that we may be cloathed upon with our Houſe from Heaven, that Mortality might be ſwallowed up of Life.* Death

2 Cor. 5. 2, 4.

is

but a Divine Sleep; *A*
eeping in Jeſus, and an In- 1 Theſſ. 4. 14.
et to ſweet Reſt and Repoſe. Iſa. 57. 2.

2. *His Reward was at hand.*
Where you have,

I. The Reward ſpecified. *A Crown of Righ-eouſneſs.*
II. The Mode of Diſpenſation. *Shall give.*
III. The Diſpenſer. *The Lord the Righteous Judge.*
IV. The Certainty of the Reward. *Laid up for me.*
V. The Seaſon of Inauguration. *In that Day.*
VI. The Extenſiveneſs of the Benefit. *Not to me only, but to all thoſe that love his appearing.*

I. The Reward ſpecified. *A Crown of Righ-eouſneſs;*

Some think the Metaphor of a Crown (by which the Dignity and Glory of the Heavenly State is ſet forth) is an Alluſion to the Combatants in the *Roman* Games; in which the Conqueror did not only obtain the Prize, but alſo a Crown of Bays, or Lawrel, was placed upon his Head: And this, as it was a Token of Victory, ſo it was reckon'd a mighty Piece of Honour conferr'd on the Perſon that won the Prize. And thus, (tho' in an infinitely higher Manner) ſhall it be done to the Man, to the Chriſtian, whom God delights to honour. He that

hath

hath fought the good Fight, ſhall be crown'd: Not with a Crown of fading Bays, but a Heavenly Crown, a Crown of Life and Immortality.

This Crown here promiſed is call'd a Crown of Righteouſneſs: And why? *Not that it is diſpenſed as the Fruit of Righteouſneſs in us:* No Creature Merit is the Foundation of this Donation. When we have done all we are but unprofitable Servants. Our own Righteouſneſs is but as filthy Rags, and can't deſerve to be crown'd with Eternal Glory. But Eternal Glory, our Happineſs in Heaven, is repreſented under the Notion of a Crown of Righteouſneſs upon a double Account: *As it is the Purchaſe of Righteouſneſs*, and *as diſpenſed as the Reward thereof.*

1. *As it is the Purchaſe of Righteouſneſs.* Our Happineſs in Heaven is owing to what Chriſt our great Surety hath wrought out for us here on Earth. Had he not obey'd the Law, and died at the Altar, we ſhou'd never reign in Glory. If we have Boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt, 'tis by the Blood of Jeſus, *Heb.* 20. 19. It's through the Merit of his Divinity, and the Vale of his Humanity, that there is *conſecrated for us a new and living Way* to the Heavenly Throne. *Heb.* 10. 20.

2. As it is diſpenſed as the Reward of Righteouſneſs. Not ours, but Chriſt's: Chriſt having fulfill'd all Righteouſneſs, having

g obey'd the Law, ſuſtain'd the Pœnal anction, ſatisfied Juſtice, that we might be eceived to Glory; it is but a juſt and equi- able Thing with God to admit thoſe to ternal Life and Happineſs, who have a laim to, and an Intereſt in the Purchaſe nd Satisfaction of Chriſt.

Heavenly Glory then is here call'd a rown of Righteouſneſs: Not with Reſpect o *us*, as tho' there was any thing in us hat deſerved ſo glorious a Retribution; but ith Reſpect to *Chriſt*, by whom the Father as receiv'd the Attonement, and compleat atisfaction for our Offences.

Our Claim is founded in *Grace*; Chriſt's laim for us is founded in *Right*. So that s a Righteous Thing with God to recom- ence Eternal Life to thoſe who having an ntereſt in Chriſt are entituled to his Claim. Were it not thus, our Lord would not be ſo eremptory in his Claim on our Behalf as we nd he is. John 17. 24. *Father I will, that hoſe thou haſt given me be with me where I m, that they may behold my Glory.* *Behold it*, ot as curious Spectators, but as ſuch who by eholding ſhall be repleniſh'd with Glory, ac- cording to the utmoſt Capacity of receiving. Their Views will be transforming, and when hey behold him they ſhall be made like him. 1 *John* 3. 2.

II. The Mode of Diſpenſation. It's by Gift. *The Righteous Judge ſhall give.* Tho' the Crown coſt Chriſt dear, to us it's not of

Debt,

Debt, but of *Grace*. Our future Glory is owing to Abundance of Grace in the Donor. *They which receive abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in Life by one Chriſt Jeſus*, Rom. 5. 17. Righteouſneſs prepares the Way to our Glorification; but this Righteouſneſs is given; ſo that there is abundance of Grace and Favour in the Donor. Our Glorification by Chriſt doth not leſſen the *Grace* of God. For, who gave Chriſt to be Righteouſneſs for us, and allows his Purchaſe to be available for our Diſcharge? Beſides, *Chriſtian*, who enroll'd thy Name in the Lamb's Book of Life? How cameſt thou within the Compaſs of the Divine Decree, and Purpoſes of Love rather than others? Was thou not one of the Apoſtacy? One of the ſame wretched polluted Lump that the reſt of Mankind are of? Who made thee to differ? And how cameſt thou to be a *Veſſel of Mercy fitting for Glory*, when others (whoſe Natures were not worſe than thine) *are Veſſels of Wrath fitted for Deſtruction?* Can this be reſolved into any Thing but *Soveraign Grace?* If you come to the *Kingdom*, it's becauſe *it's the Father's good Pleaſure.*

1 *Cor.* 4. 7.

Rom. 9. 22, 23.

Luke 12. 32.

III. The Diſpenſer. *The Lord the Righteous Judge.* Sometimes the Power of Judgment is attributed to God the Father, and ſome-

ometimes to Jesus Christ. To God the Fa-
her, as the Power of Judging is originally
nd fundamentally in him, as God: To
Christ as Mediator, receiving a delegated
Power from the Father. *The Father judg-
eth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment
to the Son——— and hath given him Au-
thority to execute Judgment also, because he
is the Son of Man,* John 5. 22, 27. This Work is rather committed to Christ, than perform'd either *by the Father*, or the *Divine Spirit*; because he only is the *Son of Man*. He only of the *Divine Persons* has assum'd, our Nature; and therefore Infinite Wisdom thinks it most congruous and agreeable that he who is God in our Nature shou'd be our Judge.

And besides, he is exhibited under the Notion of a *Prince* as well as a *Saviour*. His *Kingly Authority* has been promulgated and made known, and before the Great Day shall be more universally proclaim'd. Now it's meet as a *King* he shou'd have the Retribution of Rewards and Punishments. The Apostle recognizes this Authority of Christ in the Text, when he saith, *The Lord the Righteous Judge*. That Christ is meant, is plain fom the latter Part of the Verse; *to all those that love his appearing*. Whose appearing? *The Lord the Righteous Judge:* The Lord Christ, at his Second Coming.

This Lord the Righteous Judge answers his Character, in conferring a Crown of Glory on his People.

1. *In that he gives nothing but his own.*

2. *His own Word and Promise engage him thereunto.*

1. *He gives nothing but his own.* Heaven and Eternal Life are his Purchase: And besides, he has actually receiv'd the Investiture from the Father. He is let into the Possession of his own Purchase. John 17. 2. *As thou hast given him Power over all Flesh, that he should give Eternal Life to as many as thou hast given him.* So that he gives but his own, and therein he doth Righteously.

2. *His own Word and Promise engage him thereunto.* By these he encourageth the Faith and Hope of his People. Rev. 2. 10. *Be faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.* Rev. 3. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my Throne.* Before he left this Earth, he assured his Disciples (and the same Thing concerns all succeeding Believers) that he went to *prepare a Place for them*, and that *he would come again and receive them to himself, that where he is, they might be also.* John 14. 2, 3. And the Apostle guided by an infallible Spirit tells us, that *Jesus our Forerunner is entred Heaven for us.* So that in the Dispensation of Heavenly Glory to his People he judgeth Righteously; because his Promises encourage their Expectations thereof. He can't be worse than

than his Word. Shall not the Judge of all the World do Righteously?

IV. The Certainty of the Reward: *Laid up for me.* Laid up not only in the Counsels and Purpose of God, (as Heaven is said to be a Kingdom prepared from the Foundation of the World) and secured by the Promises of God; but laid up in the Hands of a Mediator. There's a Christian's Security: *His Life is hid with Christ in God*, Col. 3. 3. His Treasure is where *neither Moth nor Rust can corrupt, nor Thieves break through and steal*, Mat. 6. 20. Tho' he meets with fierce Opposition in the Way, he shall be crown'd at last. *David* was hunted like a Partridge upon the Mountains, before he came to be King over *Israel*: But he knew that faithful was he who had promised, and with Patience he waited God's Time, and at Length received the Crown. So the Christian has a Promise of a Crown; a better Crown, a *Crown that is incorruptible*, 1 Pet. 1. 4. This he strives for, and this he shall obtain. The Head of the meanest Saint shall be a Crown'd Head. Rev. 1. 5, 6. *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father.* Nothing shall interpose to cut off the Christian from his Crown. *He shall be kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. Here he has his *Anointing*, and his *Coronation* is

Mat. 25. 34.

at Hand. And this leads to the Fifth Particular.

V. The Season of Inauguration. *Shall give unto me in that Day.* There's a Twofold Day of the Christian's Inaugnration: The one *Private*, the other *Publick* and *Open*.

1. *Private.* And that is the Day of his Death. His Immortal Soul, no sooner doth it leave this Earthly Clay, but it is receiv'd into the Arms of a Mediator, and crown'd in Glory. *This Day shalt thou be with me in Paradice*, Luke 23. 43. The Happiness of the Soul is not deferr'd 'till the Resurrection of the Body; nor is there a State of Purgation to pass through, but immediately at Death it is received into Glory. No sooner doth *Lazarus* die, but *he was carried by Angels into Abraham's Bosom*, Luke 16. 22. St. *Paul* wou'd not have been so eager in his Desires to be dissolved, if he had thought his Happiness wou'd have been suspended 'till the General Resurrection; much less if he had thought of a *Purgatory* to pass through before he cou'd come to Christ. No! he well knew that no sooner shou'd he be *dissolved*, but he shou'd *be with Christ*, Phil. 1. 21. And indeed, what should hinder the Happiness of a holy Soul immediately at Death? Heaven is as fit to receive him as ever it will be. It is prepared by the Divine Purpose and Decree from the Foundation of the World. It is purchased by the Blood of Christ, who by his

his Death hath open'd Heaven, and he himself is entred Heaven as our Forerunner, to give us an Inlet into Glory upon our Dissolution. And as Heaven is ready for holy Souls at Death, so are they prepared for Heaven. All the Work that can be done, is done before Death. *For there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave, whither we are going*, Eccl. 9. 10. The Saints Justification is compleat before Death, and their Sanctification at Death. *The Spirits of just Men* are then *made perfect*. What then should hinder their Glorification? Heb. 12. 23.

2. *publick* and *Open*. And that's what in Scripture is called the *Day of the Lord*, *the Great Day*, *the last Day* and *the Day of Judgment*. Here the Apostle calls it by Way of Emphasis, *That Day*. Such a Day as the World never saw; when all the Hosts of Angels, and all the Progeny of *Adam* shall be gathered together. This will be a great and a Notable Day indeed! This shall be the Saints Coronation Day. His Soul entred into Glory before, but then he shall be made happy in Soul and Body, and shall reign in Glory by Christ Jesus. *All the Children of God shall then be gathered together in one, that are now scattered abroad.* And there are Crowns for them all. *Fear not little Flock, it is your Father's* 1 Thess. 5. 2. Jude 6. John 11. 24. 1 John 4. 17. John 11. 52.

their's good Pleasure to give you a Kingdom, Luke 12. 32. Little Flock compar'd with those that perish, tho' in themselves they are a mighty Number; and all of them bear the Ensigns of Royalty. *Rev.* 7. 9. *I beheld, and lo a great Multitude which no Man could number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues, stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, with white Robes, and Palms in their Hands.*

VI. The Extensiveness of th Benefit. *Not to me only, but to all those that love his appearing.* All those that are endued with like precious *Faith*: All that *fight* the good Fight; All that *finish* their *Course*, and love the *Appearance* of our Lord Jesus; there is laid up for them a *Crown* of Righteousness.

There's a Twofold Appearance of Christ; His first and his second Appearance. *His first Appearance*: His Manifestation in the Flesh, and his dwelling with Men, the Scripture often speaks of, and the Apostle particularly in this Epistle. 2 Tim. 1. 10. *But now is made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ.* The loving this Appearance is the loving him as God manifested in the Flesh: The receiving and accepting of him in the Character and Capacity he stands in to us: A Glorying in the Cross of Christ, notwithstanding the *Jews stumble at it*, and the *Greeks* account it *Foolishness*. All the Marks of Ignominy and Meanness that appear'd in him,

1 Cor. 1. 23.

him, in his State of Humiliation; the Christian is so far from being offended in him on that Account, that they all tend to raise his Admiration and Love: Because he submitted to all this for our Sakes, and for our Good. Was he poor? It was that thro' his *Poverty we might be made rich: Was he smitten, stricken and afflicted? It was for our Transgressions he was wounded, and he was bruised for our Iniquities; the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and with his Stripes we are healed.* Did he undergo not only the Miseries of this Life, but submitted to Death it self; and even a shameful and an accursed Death? He suffer'd, the *just for the unjust*, that he might bring many Sons to God. And tho' he bore the *Curse*, it was to *redeem us from the Curse of the Law*, and that *the Blessing of Abraham might come upon us Gentiles.* All this shou'd make us love Christ's first Appearance.

2 Cor. 8. 9. Isa. 53. 4, 5.

1 Pet. 3. 18.

Gal. 3. 13, 14.

His Second Appearance: And this is meant of his coming at the last Day. This the Text seems to point at; and the Word signifies a Bright and Glorious Appearance: Such as his Second Coming will be, *When he shall come with Ten Thousand of his Saints, and shall descend*

ἐπιφάνειαν

Jude 14. 1 Thess. 4. 16.

from

from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of an Archangel, and the Trump of God.

Now the loving this Appearance includes Two Things: *Desire* and *Prayer* for it, and *Delight* and *Joy* in the Expectation of it.

1. *Desire* and *Prayer* for it. This we pray for when we pray, *Thy Kingdom come.* We pray not only for its Enlargement in this World, but that it may come to its designed Grandeur; which won't be 'till the Second Appearance of our Lord Jesus. Those that love this Appearance will pray for it. No sooner doth our Lord say, *Surely I come quickly:* But *John* the Divine adds, *Amen, even so come Lord Jesus.* Re. 22. 20.

2. *Delight* and *Joy* in the Expectations of it. This Glorious Appearance, as it exercises their Faith; so the Hopes of it promote their Joy. There's enough entertaining in the Prospects of it. It will be a terrible Day to the Wicked, but a joyful and Glorious Day to the Righteous. It doth not yet appear what they shall be, but then they shall shine forth, as the Sons of God, without Rebuke. Here they are *Minors*, there they come to their Inheritance, and receive the Kingdom prepared for them.

And when their Spirits are ready to fail them, under the Burdens and Pressures of this present State, their looking for this blessed Hope and Glorious Appearance of the great God,

God, and our Saviour, is that which ſupports and revives their ſinking Spirits.

Having thus in Part open'd the Words, they make Way for this ſingle Point of Inſtruction.

The Dignity and Glory of the Heavenly State ſhall be the Portion of all thoſe, that have fought the good Fight, that have finiſhed their Courſe, and kept the Faith.

Here I ſhou'd enter upon a Deſcription of the *Dignity* and *Glory* of the Heavenly State, ſet forth in the Text under the Notion of a *Crown* of *Righteouſneſs*, could we form diſtinct Notions thereof, and would the Limits of a ſingle Diſcourſe allow it: What we know conſiſts pretty much in Generals. We ſhall be free from all *Evil*, and fill'd with all *Good*. We ſhall know, love, ſerve and enjoy God in an unſpeakably ſweeter and better Manner than here we can do: And after all we can ſay, or think, Heaven will vaſtly outdo what our preſent Expectations are. What ſeems to be ſpoken primarily concerning the Glory of the Goſpel Diſpenſation, may very fairly be applied to the Glorys of the Heavenly State. They are ſo great and unſpeakable, that *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of Man, the things which God hath prepar'd for them that love him*, 1 Cor. 2. 9.

But I muſt wave inſiſting on this Topick, and proceed,

1. *To enquire into the Import of theſe Phraſes, I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith.*

2. *Prove, That the Dignity and Glory of the Heavenly State ſhall be the Portion of all ſuch.*

3. *Apply.*

1. *The Import of theſe Phraſes.* (And I have reſerved the particular Explication of them to this Place.)

1. *I have fought a good Fight.* And here we ſhall enquire,

1. *What Fight may be term'd a good Fight.*

2. *How this Battle muſt be fought.*

1. *What Fight may be term'd a good Fight.* There muſt be theſe Two Things among others.

A juſt Provocation: And
A Lawful Commiſſion.

1. *A juſt Provocation.* Where *War* becomes neceſſary and lawful, there is Injury either done, or deſign'd, by thoſe we War with. In the Chriſtian Warfare there is both Injury received, and further Injury intended. Much Evil we have ſuſtain'd from our Spiritual Enemies: The *Fleſh*, the *World*, and the *Devil*. We have (through the Deceitfulneſs of

of Sin, and the Subtilty of the Devil) loſt the Divine Image, and loſt Divine Favour. We are fallen from his Love, and become the Objects of his Wrath: And after amazing Grace (purſuant of the Attonement receiv'd) reſtores the Divine Image, and receives us to Favour; theſe our Adverſaries, how induſtrious are they in their Attempts to obliterate, or at leaſt ſully and ſpoil the Beauty of this Image, and create new Breaches between God and us? Not contented with the Miſchiefs already done us, they do their utmoſt to expoſe us to the Diſpleaſure of Heaven again, and fain would accompliſh and bring about the Ruin of our Immortal Souls.

Certainly, if ever there was a juſt Reaſon for any to betake themſelves to their Arms, there is for the Chriſtian. If the Defence of our Temporal Lives, and Liberties, is looked upon as highly neceſſary, tho' it be at the Expence of the Death of our Oppoſers; much more the Life of our Souls calls for a manly and Chriſtian Defence. Now our Spiritual Enemies hunt for the precious Life, and as we love our Souls, we muſt hate and oppoſe them.

2. *A Lawful Commiſſon.* When we engage in a War, we muſt have the Call of Authority. The Chriſtian in his Spiritual Warfare has his Commiſſion to produce: He has the beſt Authority on his Side. Not only the *Law of Nature* (one of the Fundamen-

tal Principles whereof is Self-preſervation) but *poſitive Commands* from God: *Be ſober, be vigilant, becauſe your Adverſary the Devil, as a roaring Lion walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devour, whom reſiſt ſtedfaſt in the Faith.* 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. *Thou, O Man of God, flee theſe Things,* (*i. e*) Covetouſneſs, and an immoderate Love of Riches, (as appears from the Verſe before) *follow after Righteouſneſs, Godlineſs, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekneſs: Fight the good Fight of Faith, lay hold on Eternal Life.* So 1 Cor. 9. 26, 27. *I therefore ſo run, not as uncertainly; ſo fight I, not as one that beateth the Air: But I keep under my Body,* (Here was a War againſt the Fleſh) *and bring it into Subjection.* And we have in *Eph.* 6. 10.——19. particular Inſtructions how to behave our ſelves in the Chriſtian Warfare. *Finally, my Brethren, be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might: Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to ſtand againſt the Wiles of the Devil; for we wreſtle not againſt Fleſh and Blood, but againſt Principalities, againſt Powers, againſt Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, againſt Spiritual Wickedneſs in High places. Stand therefore, having your Loins girt about with Truth, and having on the Breaſt-plate of Righteouſneſs, and your Feet ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel; above all, taking the Shield of Faith—— and the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit—— praying always with all Prayer——*

2. *How this Battle muſt be fought.*

1. *In*

1. *In the Strength of Christ.* None can engage to any Purpose, in this Warfare, in his own Strength. We must call in Aid and Succour from above. The Apostle points out the Source and Spring from whence his *Might* and *Power* came. *I can do all things,* (How comes this Man of God to be so mighty?) *thro' Christ which strengthneth me,* Phil. 4. 13. And when he was sorely beset by his Hellish Adversary, and his own inbred Corruptions; *a Thorn in the Flesh,* and a *Messenger of Satan to buffet him,* he knew where his Relief laid. He plies the Throne, and receives Assurance from Christ: *My Grace is sufficient for thee; for my Strength is made perfect in Weakness,* 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8, 9. So that the Christian's Strength is above. Is he strong to resist and vanquish his Spiritual Enemies? *'Tis in the Lord and the Power of his Might.* Eph. 6. 10.

2. *With Vigilance and a holy Circumspection: Let us not sleep as do others, but watch and be sober;* 1 Thess. 5. 6. Our Enemies are awake, 'twill be dangerous for us to be found sleeping. Not only because we give the Enemy Advantage, but herein we highly offend Christ. Rev. 3. 3. *If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a Thief, and thou shalt not know what Hour I will come upon thee.* And the peculiar Acceptance we shall meet with at his Coming, if we are found waking, shou'd excite us thereunto. *Blessed is*

that

that Servant, (Bleſſed ſhall he be above, and more than others) *whom his Lord when he cometh ſhall find ſo doing*, Luk. 12. 43. So Rev. 16. 15. *Behold I come as a Thief, bleſſed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his Garments.* Thoſe that let down their Watch when Chriſt comes, tho' they mayn't wholly be excluded a Bleſſing (if their Hearts were right with God) yet they ſhan't be bleſſed in ſo large and eminent a Degree, as the watchful Chriſtian ſhall be.

3. *With Labour and Induſtry.* We muſt exert the Strength and Power of our Souls in this Warfare. There's a *Curſe* pronounced againſt him that doth the *Work of the Lord deceitfully*, or *negligently*, Jer. 48. 10. In this Warfare we muſt labour as in an Agony: (For ſo the Word ἀγωνιῶμεν ſignifies) denoting an Inward Labour. The Labour of the *Mind*, and the other *Powers* of the Soul. It's not a *Scuffle* with the *Hands*, (as one expreſſes it), but a *Struggle* and *Conflict* of *Mind* that we are called unto.

4. *Indefatigably.* We muſt not *wax weary, nor faint in our Minds.* He obtains not the *Prize* that holds not out to the End of the *Race.* If we are not *faithful unto Death*, how ſhou'd we expect a *Crown of Life?* It's the perſevering Chriſtian that ſhall wear the Crown. Our Labour will be unſucceſsful, if

Heb. 12. 3.

Rev. 2. 10.

f we begin in the Spirit and
nd in the Flesh. If we would Gal. 6. 9.
eap Eternal Glory, *We must*
ot faint, nor be weary of well-doing.

2. *I have finished my Course.* Herein he opied after the great Example of our Lord and Master, who a little before his Departure, makes his Appeal to the Father; *I have finished the Work which thou gavest me to do,* Joh. 17. 4. Let's Enquire,

1. What Course is to be finished: And
2. How.

1. What Course is to be finished.

There's a *Twofold Course* every Man should be careful to *finish: His General Course as a Christian; and his particular Course, in that Station the Providence of God has placed him.*

1. *His General Course as a Christian.* There are the Common Duties of Religion incumbent on all, which none shou'd plead Exemption from. This in Scripture is call'd the *running the Way of God's Commandments.* Psal. 119. 32. Which points out not only the Work done, but the Readiness of Spirit wherewith it was done. So Psal. 119. 60. *I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.* With what Vigour our Apostle press'd forward in his Christian Course, you find Phil. 3. 13, 14. —— *Reaching forth*

to

to those Things which are before, I press to
wards the Mark, for the Prize of the high Cal-
ling of God in Christ Jesus. And thus must all do, that with the Apostle would finish their Course as Christians.

2. *His particular Course in that Station the Providence of God has placed him.* As with Respect to his *General Calling*, he must be *fervent in Spirit*; Rom. 12. 11. so as to his *particular Calling*, he must be, *Not slothful in Business*, if he would *serve the Lord.*

These Two Courses are not to interfere, nor cross one another. The Man of Wisdom will see to his Walk as a Christian, and yet *will abide* with Diligence *in that Calling whereunto God hath called him.*

Paul's particular *Course* which he finished was that of an *Apostle* and a *Minister.* He was careful to discharge what that Character oblig'd him unto. He was careful as a Christian, in his General Course, to save his own Soul; and he was careful as an Apostle, and a Minister, in his particular Course, to promote the common Salvation. He labour'd abundantly to help forward the Salvation of the Souls of Men.

2. *How our Course must be finished.*

(1.) *With Impartiality.* We must not have Regard to some Part of our Work, and neglect other Parts. The Notion of *finishing* supposes

pposes that we do not our Work by Halves! nd yet this is the woful Mistake of many rofessors. They oftimes shew a great Par- ality, both in their General, and in their articular Course. It is with them, as Christ hargeth the Church at *Sardis. Their Works are ot perfect before God*, Rev. 3. 2. They are not *filled up*, (as the πεπληρωμένα Word Signifies.) Which may mport not only a Deficency in those Duties ney did perform, but also a total Neglect and Omission of other Duties, which were expected rom them. Something they did, but other hings they wilfully and carefly Omitted. So ar from coming up to the Perfection of Obedience, (which none in this imperfect tate can) that in many things they came hort of the Perfection of Sincerity. *Simon* he Sorcerer once assumed a Profession, and vas Baptized, but afterward the Rotteness f his Heart appeared; and *Peter* tells him, *by Heart is not right in the sight of God*, Acts : 21. And where it is thus, let the outward how of Religion be never so specious, such an never say with the Apostle, *I have finished my Course*. If the Heart be Corrupt, let our Works be never so fair to look to, they will not be found perfect before God. 'Tis rue, where the Heart may be Savingly re- ewed, there may be some Works that are Dead Works; (as we are Sanctified but in Part) but if the *Heart* be not renew'd all our Works, however outwardly they may ap- pear to Men, they are in the Sight of God,

but Dead Works. Would we finiſh our Courſe, as God expects, we muſt get our Hearts quicken'd and renew'd by Divine Grace; and when that's done, we muſt with a holy Impartiality, have a Regard to the whole Compaſs of revealed Duty. This was *David*'s Aim and Deſire, and therein he gave full Proof of his Integrity. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy Statutes, then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy Commandments.* Pſal. 119. 5, 6. And the more will our Impartiality, and the Integrity of our Hearts appear, the more we are carried forth in Oppoſition to thoſe particular Sins, (which ſo far as Unſanctified,) our Hearts are moſt addicted and prone to. Thus it was with the Pſalmiſt: *I was alſo Upright before him, and I kept my ſelf from mine iniquity*, Pſal. 18. 23. There are ſome *Sins* that are *Conſtitutional Sins.* Sins that are Mortified and Subdued with extream Difficulty; that are like the *Cutting off of right Hands*, and the *plucking out of right Eyes*: Now herein it is that the Chriſtian has an Opportunity, in his Spiritual Warfare, of making it evident that he is a *Good Soldier* of Chriſt, and that he is reſolved to *finiſh his Courſe*, when he ventures upon ſo great an Enterprize, and ſo difficult a Work as this is: And yet this muſt be done. He that won't deny himſelf in this Reſpect, cannot be Chriſt's Diſciple; the terms of Diſcipleſhip won't allow, that any Luſt, (tho it be but a ſingle Luſt) ſhould rival it with Chriſt Jeſus. (2.)

(2.) *With Alacrity, and Chearfulneſs.* We muſt not do the Work of the Lord Grudgingly. When King *David* ſo earneſtly recommended Religion to his Son *Solomon*, 1. *Chron.* 28. among other things he particularly preſſes this, *V.* 9. *ſerve him with a perfect Heart, and with a willing Mind.* All our Religion is nothing, where a *Willing Mind* is wanting. And on the other hand, where there is a *Willing Mind*, tho' we may come ſhort of what we deſire and aim at, yet this is accepted of God; God took it well that *David had it in his Heart to Build him an Houſe*, tho' that Work was to be reſerved for his Son *Solomon*: And the Apoſtle tells us, 2. Cor. 8. 12. *If there be firſt a willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* If we have not this *Willing Mind*, we ſhall move on heavily in the Ways of God. We are never likely to finiſh our Courſe, if our Hearts be not engaged in the Work: Whatever Duties we engage in, God ſtill ſaith to us, *Give me thy Heart*; and he values not thoſe Services where the Heart is withdrawn. The *Jews* met with no Thanks for their Pains, notwithſtanding all their Pompous Shew of Religion. *When ye faſted and mourn'd in the fifth and the ſeventh Month, even thoſe ſeventy Years, did ye at all faſt unto me, even to me?* Zech. 7. 5. He appeals to themſelves, whether they had not ſomething elſe

1. Kings 8. 18.

Prov. 23. 26.

in View than his Honour, and whether what they did was out of a Principle of Love to him, and an unfeigned Deſign to promote his Glory. Perſons may weary themſelves out in the Externals of Religion, and never finiſh their Courſe, and receive the Crown, becauſe the Heart is withdrawn from God: They do not what they do to him, and ſo their Religion is vain. In every Piece of Devotion, and every Part of Religion, it highly concerns us to ſee to it, that what we do, we do it with Chearfulneſs and Freedom of Spirit, as unto God. *Every Man according as he purpoſeth in his Heart*, let him do it, *not grudgingly* —— *but of a willing Mind, for God loveth a chearful Giver.* 2 Cor. 9. 7.

3. *I have kept the Faith.*

Here we ſhall enquire, *What Faith we muſt keep*: And *How we muſt keep it.*

(1.) What Faith we muſt keep. There is the *Grace* of *Faith* we are to endeavour to maintain, cultivate and improve: We are to take Care not to loſe of what we have received, but improve and grow therein. But the *Doctrine* of *Faith*, the *Goſpel*, is that which the Apoſtle ſeems chiefly to intend.

This he ſpeaks of as a Truſt, 1 Cor. 9. 17. and a *Truſt committed to him*. So you find, 2 Cor. 5. 18. —— *Hath com-*

committed to us the Miniſtry of Reconciliation. Now, as he received the *Goſpel* as a *Truſt*, he was faithful to it; *He kept the Faith*: And he *kept it*, as it was deliver'd. He kept it *pure*, and without *Adulteration*, without falling in with the *Errors* of the *Times*. He did not confound the *Ceremonial Law* with the *Goſpel*, nor jumble together *Works* and *Grace*, in the Buſineſs of Juſtification, as the *Judaizing* Teachers did. He retain'd an unmixed Goſpel; and fired with true Zeal for the Honour of it, how vigorouſly doth he oppoſe and rebuke the falſe Teachers, who were for intermixing *Law* and *Grace?* And when that Great Apoſtle *Peter*, (for the greateſt of Men are but Men) was in eminent Danger of warping, and too much leaning to the *Judaizing* Teachers; *Paul withſtood him to the face, becauſe he was to be blamed*, Gal. 2. 11,— 14.

And as he was careful to *keep the Faith* himſelf; ſo he was ſolicitous that others ſhou'd be inſtructed and well informed in the Faith too. He gives *this* in ſpecial Charge to *Timothy*. 1 Tim. 6. 20. *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy Truſt.* Keep the Goſpel, as it was deliver'd Pure and unmixed.

And this Faith ſhou'd every Chriſtian keep for himſelf, and the Benefit of his own Soul. He ſhou'd beware that he be not led away of *divers* and *ſtrange Doctrines:* Be the Inſinuations never ſo ſubtil, he ſhou'd have Regard to the Apoſtle's Advice, *Phil.* 4. 9.

Theſe

Thoſe things which you have both learn'd, and received, and heard, and ſeen in me, do: And the God of peace ſhall be with you. The ſame concerns all Chriſtians, in their Place, for the Security of their own Souls, what *Paul* directs *Timothy*, Chap. 3. 14. *Continue in the Things which thou haſt learn'd, and haſt been aſſured of, knowing of whom thou haſt learned them.* The Apoſtle *Jude* directs his Epiſtle in General, *To all them that are ſanctified by God the Father, and preſerved in Jeſus Chriſt, and called.* And he writes to them, and exhorts them, *That they would earneſtly contend for the Faith, which was once deliver'd to the Saints.* Ver. 3.

2. *How we muſt keep the Faith.* What Methods we muſt take in Order to the preſerving thereof. Some there are 1 Tim. 1. 19. that make *Shipwreck of Faith.* If we would not be like theſe, but would keep the Faith, we muſt

1. *Study the Scriptures, and receive them as the Rule of Faith: They are able to make us wiſe unto Salvation,* 1 Tim. 3. 15. By the *Study* of theſe, as we are likely to learn the *Faith*, and *receive the Truth as it is in Jeſus*; ſo by ſubmitting to their Authority, as a *Rule of Faith*, we ſhall be likely to perſevere in the Faith. How great were the Attainments of the *Pſalmiſt* in Divine Knowledge? *I have more Underſtanding than all my Teachers.* And how came he to be ſo well furniſhed?

For

For thy Teſtimonies are my Meditation. Pſal. 119. 99. And Ver. 104. *Through thy Precepts I get Underſtanding.* And Ver. 130. *The Entrance of thy Words giveth Light, it giveth Underſtanding unto the ſimple.* Would we receive and keep the Faith, the *Word* muſt be our *Teacher* and *Guide*. We muſt come thereunto with an Humble and Docible Mind, willing to learn and be inſtructed, as thoſe that would receive Inſtruction and Information from it: And not as thoſe that carry their Notions to it, and would fain have the *Word* to favour and countenance them, when it may be, in ſo doing, *They wreſt the Scriptures unto their own Deſtruction*, 2 Pet. 3. 16.

2. *Pray earneſtly for the Divine Spirit.* The *Word*, tho' in it ſelf it is a *ſufficient Light*, and contains all *neceſſary Divine Knowledge*, ſuited to our preſent State, yet of it ſelf, it can't enlighten us, and let us into that Divine Knowledge it contains, without the Agency of the Divine Spirit: No more than the *Sun*, tho' it be the *Fountain* of *Light*, can cauſe a Blind Man to ſee. There's a Diſorder in our Intellectual Powers, which muſt firſt be rectified, before the *Word* can enter, ſo as to give *Light*: *For the Natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs to him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcern'd*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. Now this Diſorder none can rectify but the *Spirit* of *God*. He is ſtiled the *Spi-*

rit

rit of *Truth*, becauſe it is his Office to *Guid us into all Truth*, John 16. 13. He is ſen by the *Father*, in *Chriſt's Name, that he migh teach us all things*, John 14. 26. All thing neceſſary for us to know, in Order to Salva tion.

Second Head. *To prove that the Dignity an Glory of the Heavenly State ſhall be the Portio of all thoſe that have fought the good Figh that have finiſhed their Courſe, and kept th Faith.*

(1.) *They are choſen unto ſo bleſſed a State* They fall within the Compaſs of the Purpo ſes and Deſigns of Electing Love. Divin good Pleaſure has in his Eternal Decree prepared Heaven for them, and deſigned them for the Heavenly State. *Bleſſed be the Go and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all Spiritual Bleſſings in Heaven ly places in Chriſt, according as he hath cho ſen us in him, before the Foundation of th World*, Eph. 1. 3, 4. *Heavenly Bleſſings i* the World to come, which are nearly and inſeparably connected with *Spiritual Bleſſing* in this World, come in *according as God hath choſen us in Chriſt from the Foundation of th World.* The Chriſtian's Heaven is not a Pro ject of Yeſterday, but from all Eternity; was prepared in the Divine Purpoſe and Decree.

(2.) *The Dignity and Glory of this State i the fruit of Chriſt's Purchaſe.* Chriſt died that the

e Christian might live and reign in Life, e has by his Meritorious Death and Suf- rings open'd Heaven for us. He *hath once ffer'd for Sins, the just for the unjust, that might bring many Sons to God.* 1 Pet. 3. 18. ll the Obstacles in the Way of the Chri- an's Happiness, he has removed. He has peased *Divine Justice*, which would (were not for Christ's Death) by no means clear e guilty. He has *fulfill'd all Righteousness*, d therein answer'd the Demands of a vio- ted Law. He has *expiated Sin*, d *vanquished Death*, and *sub- ed him* that had the *Power of eath, that is the Devil.* See what lofty Expressions the Apostle speaks a Redeemer's Conquest. Col. 2. 15. *Ha- ng spoiled Principalities and Powers, he made Shew of them openly, triumphing over them in nself.* When Christ our Blessed *Surety* has ne all this, what shou'd hinder the Chri- an, when he comes at the End of his Race, om receiving the Prize? When his War- re is over, his Work done, he shall cer- inly receive the *Crown of Righteousness*, which rsuant of the Death and Satisfaction of hrist, is laid up for him.

Rom. 3. 25. Heb. 2. 14.

(3.) Christ has taken Possession of Heaven- Places, *for those that have fought the good ght, that have finished their Course, and kept e Faith. I go to prepare a Place for you*, and *is entred Heaven as our Forerunner*, (as we inted before.) As by his *Resurrection*, we

are assured of the Fulness of the Payment
our Debt; so by his ascending up into He
venly Places, we are assured of approachi
Glory. Had he been held by the Cords
Death, and continued in the Grave, o
Hopes had moulder'd to Dust with his Bo
dy: Or after the Resurrection, had he too
up his Residence on this Earth, our Hop
would have aspired no higher than the Pla
of his Residence: But when we do not on
see him rising from the Dead, but mounte
into incorruptible Glory, we have all th
Reason we can desire, to believ
John 14. 3. that *where he* now *is, there* h
People *shall be also.* His Wo
and Promise not only encourage our Fai
and Hope; but the Capacity in which he e
tred Heaven, and the Relation Believe
stand in to him, assure us thus much: S
sure is the Believer's Advancement to Glo
ry, upon Christ's Entrance into Heaven, th
the Apostle speaks as tho' we were alread
there. Eph. 2. 5, 6. *Even when we were de
in Sins, hath quickned us together with Chri
and hath raised us up together, and made us
together in Heavenly Places, in Christ Jesu*
He being in Heaven, all Believers are s
virtually in Heavenly Places with him: An
in due Time, they shall all be *where he i
that they may behold his Glory.*

(4.) and *Lastly.* Those who fight the goo
Fight, finish their Course, and keep the Faith
they are hereby fitting and preparing fo
Hea

eavenly Glory. Tho' there is no natural
d neceſſary Connexion between our Work
d our Reward, yet ſuch is the Conſtitu-
on of Heaven, that the conquering Chri-
an ſhall be crown'd with Glory, and none
all be crown'd, but thoſe that Conquer.
ur Preparation for Heavenly Glory, in the
iſcharge of the Duties of our Chriſtian
arfare, doth not give us our *Title*; but
t without this, we cannot be
ade meet for the partaking of the Col. 1. 12.
heritance of the Saints in Light.
s to a *Fundamental Meetneſs*, *we muſt be*
d's Workmanſhip, *created in Chriſt Jeſus*,
h. 2. 10. And then after this, this
orkmanſhip is carried on to greater De-
ees of *Perfection*, before we can attain a
mpleat Meetneſs. *He that hath wrought us*,
r the ſelf ſame Thing, *is God*, 2 Cor 5. 5.
e ſends down his Spirit into our Hearts to
rm the New Nature, and implant the
inciples and Seeds of Grace, and then the
me Spirit cauſeth them gradually to ripen,
d grow up to the deſign'd Maturity: For
here he once enters, he never
aves that *Soul*, 'till he hath *John* 14. 16. *Heb.* 13. 5.
ade it *meet* for Glory. And
greeable to this Divine Formation, there are
rowing Inclinations in the Saints towards
he Heavenly State, which highly diſpoſe them
or the Enjoyments of Heaven: By theſe
hey may know within themſelves,
hat they have in Heaven a better, Heb. 10. 34.
nd an enduring Subſtance.

So that, as the Saints are the only Perſons that ſhall be received to the Dignities and Glories of the Heavenly State, ſo they are the only Perſons that are fit for ſuch a State. Others have no true *Inclination* towards it, nor *Capacity* for the reliſhing the Entertainments of it. The Chriſtian can only ſay with *Job*, *I would not Live alway*, Job 7. 16. The reſt of the World would be glad to have their Heaven here. Let them have but their Eaſe, and their Pleaſure here; their *Corn*, and their *Wine* and *Oyl*; might they be but exempted from Trouble, they wou'd readily leave Heaven, and the Joys of it, to others. They are ſo ingulph'd in Senſe, that its ſtrange to them, how any ſhou'd *deſire to be diſolved and be with Chriſt*. *His Preſence* and *Fellowſhip* they value not here, and how ſhou'd they like to *dwell* with him for ever? They ſay to God *depart from us*; how then ſhou'd they like to ſee him *Face to Face*? There's a Contrariety in their Natures to true Holineſs, and ſo long, an Incapacity for *Communion with Chriſt*, and the *Enjoyment of God*. *Except a Man be born again he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*, John 3. 3. Not only becauſe God Excludes him, but becauſe *Heaven* would be no *Heaven* to him. An unenlighten'd Mind, and an unſanctified Heart, what *Delight* could they take in Heaven? A Swine that underſtands not the Delicacies of a Muſical Air, would run away affrighted, ſooner than he would take any Delight in the fineſt Conſort. He'd

He'd take more Satisfaction in a Heap of Garbiſh, and in wallowing in the Mire, (being Things ſuited to his Nature) than in thoſe Objects he is unaquainted with, and utterly uncapable to take in Entertainment and Delight from. And thus is it with unſanctified Nature, as to the Entertainment of the Heavenly State.

But the Chriſtian, he is ripening for this State: He has the Beginnings of *Heaven* upon *Earth*, in the Seeds and Principles of *Grace* and *Holineſs*; and he ſhall e'er long be ſwallow'd up in the *Happineſs* and *Glory* of Heaven. Heaven is already in ſome ſort come down into his Heart, (*the Kingdom of God is within him*) and ere long he ſhall be received to Heaven, as a Glorious and Immortal State. Luke 17. 21.

APPLICATION.

Inf. 1. *It's no eaſy Matter to be a true Chriſtian.* There's a *Fight* to be *fought*, and a *Courſe* to *finiſh*. It's an eaſie Thing to gain a *Name to live*, to be a *Chriſtian* in the *Repute* of others, but to be ſo *indeed* and *in Truth*, requires Labour: It calls for a ſtriving againſt Oppoſition; a ſharp Conflict of Mind and Soul againſt our Spiritual Enemies. Many go a great Way, and yet miſcarry at laſt: *Herod, when he heard John, did many things, and heard him gladly*, Mark 12. 20. Yet his Luſts had the Aſcendency; and he was prevailed upon, at the Inſtigation of a *wanton Woman*, to mur-

murder the *Preacher*, whose *Ministry* ha[d] sometimes come near his Conscience. *Almo[st]* (saith King *Agrippa*) *thou perswadest me to b[e] a Christian*, Acts 26. 28. But we don't fin[d] that the Conviction proved thorow and ef[-] fectual. The Young Man thought he had [a] great deal to say; *All these things have I kep[t] from my Youth up*, Mat. 19. 20. *Kept*, after [a] Fashion; so far as related to Externals; but yet was a Stranger to the inward Prin[-] ciple of Grace, and the Vitals of Religion. And even as to Externals, he fell short; for something was lacking: And when Christ sets him a *Lesson* that was displeasing to him, *Sell that thou hast and give to the poor*, Ver. 21. Tho' before he so highly valued himself upon his *Works*, this was a *Lesson* too hard for him: Now the *Rottenness* of his Heart and his *inordinate Love* of this present World appear: For this trying Command parts him and Christ. *He goes away sorrowful, for he had great Possessions*. Ver. 22.

There's something in Christianity Persons may easily be induced to fall in with: But those Acts of Religion which thwart their particular Lusts, here they boggle, and will go no further.

Inf. 2. *How pernicious in its Consequences, is Laziness in Religion?* There's a *Fight* to be *fought*, and if we don't *conquer* we shall lose the *Crown*. A lukewarm Indifferency renders our Case very hazardous. Rev. 3. 16. *Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold*

nor

nor hot, *I will ſpue thee out of my Mouth.* If we exert not our Vigour and Strength in our Chriſtian Warfare, we ſhall not only be worſted by our *Enemies*, but ſhall be greatly expoſed to the Diſpleaſure of *Chriſt*. Thoſe that are called by his Name, and would be own'd as Chriſtians, *they muſt be watchful*; and if peradventure they ſhou'd be declining, they muſt *ſtrengthen the things that remain, and are ready to die*; or elſe *he will come on them as a Thief, and they ſhall not know what Hour he will come upon them.* Rev. 3. 2, 3.

Inf. 3. *How bountiful are the Proviſions Chriſt hath made for his People!* No leſs than a *Crown of Righteouſneſs is laid up, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give unto them.* Their Induſtry and Labour in their Chriſtian Warfare, ſhan't be in vain. Tho' they are but unprofitable Servants, yet if they are ſincere and upright, they ſhan't ſerve God for Nought. He is not a hard, nor an auſtere Maſter. Thoſe that ſerve God faithfully, and *follow Chriſt in the Regeneration, when he ſits on his Throne of Glory*, they ſhall be advanced on *Thrones* too. Mat. 19. 28.

Inf. 4. *This ſhou'd rectifie the miſtaken Apprehenſions of good Perſons concerning Death.* Sometimes even true Chriſtians, becauſe they encourage their Doubts and Fears, look upon Death with *Terror* and *Dread*: Whereas the glo-

glorious Recompence in Reserve, shou'd mak them entertain the Prospects of it with J and *Delight*. *A Crown of Righteousness is la up for them.* Why shou'd they reluctate the *walking through the Valley of the Shado of Death?* Especially when they get throug the *Valley*, they shall ascend the Regions o *Light* and *Bliss.*

Inf. 5. *How careful shou'd we be, not onl that our Lives are regular, but our Judgment well inform'd?* We must see to it, not onl that our *Hearts are right with God*; but ou *Heads must be sound in the Faith.* As ther is a *Course* that we are to *finish*; so there is *Faith* we are to *keep*, if we wou'd obtai the Crown. There are *Doctrine* 2 Pet. 2. 1. that are *damning*, as well as i Morals.

Inf. 6. *So ample and full is the Reward o Heavenly Glory, that it will abundantly com pensate for all the Fatigue and Toil of our pre sent Warfare!* The Apostle looks back with Pleasure, upon all his Services for God, and the Labour of his past Life; as knowing there was *laid up for him a Crown of Righ teousness.* What made *Moses* chuse to suffer Affliction with the People of God, rather than enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Sea son? And esteem the *Reproaches of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt?* But because he had *Respect to the Recompence of Reward*, Heb. 11. 25, 26.

Inf. 7.

Inf. 7. *Assurance of Heavenly Glory is attainable in this present Life.* The Apostle speaks without Hesitation or Doubt: *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.*

Inf. 8. and last. *We shou'd learn to acquiesce in the Will of God, in the Disposal of those who have done their Work, and are gone to recieve their Reward.*

And I perswade my self there are none that hear me this Day, (who knew that eminent and Faithful Embassador of Christ, that is now taken away from us) but believe this to be his Case. It can hardly be expected that I, (whose acquaintance with him has been but of late Years) shou'd know his Character to the full, through the various Steps of the whole Course of his Life. I shan't therefore enter into many particulars, but content my self with reciting the Character that the Apostle gives of a *good Christian*, and a *good Minister*, in the Account he hath given of *himself* in the Text. And I think, without being charg'd with giving Flattering Titles to the Dead, every part of the Apostle's Character may be accommodated to the Case of our deceased *Friend* and *Father*, tho' not in so high a Sense, nor so great a Degree of Perfection as to the Apostle.

He has Fought a good Fight: And the Combat has been for many Years. He was early

early enter'd into Christ's Service, and has long fought under his Banner. And not ſatisfied with Encountering his Spiritual Enemies for the Security of his own Soul only; he was very laborious in his Attempts to pull down the Strong-holds of Sin and Satan, in the Souls of other Men. And *how Succeſsful he was, the Seals of his Miniſtry* do Teſtifie. Some of you know that *he took heed to himſelf, and his Doctrine, that he might both ſave himſelf, and them that hear him*, 1. Tim. 4. 16.

He has finiſhed his Courſe: Finiſhed the *Courſe* of *Nature*. God having ſpared him to a *good Old Age, full of Days*, and now he is fallen as a Shock of Corn, full ripe, into the Lap of his Heavenly Reaper. *Finiſhed* his *Courſe* as a *Miniſter*; (and that, as to it's Publick Exerciſes ſome Years ſince) and many of you know that he was a *Workman that needed not to be aſhamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth*; and his *Fame* that is gone forth among the *Churches*, is a Proof of this. *He gave full Proof of his Miniſtry*; *Preaching the Word*, being *Inſtant in Season and out of Season, reproving, rebuking, exhorting, with all long-ſuffering, and Doctrine*, 2. Tim. 4. 8. And *he* has *finiſhed* his *Courſe* as a *Chriſtian*. It was his Care to Adorn the Doctrine that he profeſſed, and ſo to Walk, that his *Miniſtry might not be* juſtly *blamed*. He has been an *Example* to *believers, in Word, in Converſation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity*, 1. Tim. 4. 12. After

2. Tim. 2. 15.

After God took him off from his Publick Work, he was pleas'd to employ him in waiting for the *coming of his Lord*: And herein he made it evident, that he had that *Patience* which the Apostle speaks of, *Heb.* 10. 36. *We have need of Patience, that after we have done the will of God we may receive the Promise.* Tho' he had done his *Publick Work* some Years before his Death, yet he waited with Patience to receive the Promise. Death was no surprize to him, he knew of its Approaches, and gave Intimations thereof. He entertain'd not the Prospect of it with Horror; and why should he, when he was to receive a Crown? *He has kept the Faith.* He has not only cultivated and improv'd the Seed, and principles of the *Grace* of *Faith*; but he has kept the *Doctrine* of *Faith*: The Gospel committed to his Trust. This he *Kept* in its *Purity*, free from the innovating Errors and Corrupt Doctrines of dangerous and designing Men. He was one that *held fast the Form of Sound Words*, as delivered in the *Sacred Volume*, and illustrated and explain'd, by our *Great* and *Worthy* Reformers. Nothing could sway or influence him to make Shipwreck of the Faith he had recieved, or debauch his Conscience (by sinful Compliances) for the sake of any Worldly Emoluments. And as he *kept the Faith*, so he *kept* it for publick Service: You know how careful he was to instill the Principles of wholsom and sound Know-

ledge into you. *He was no*
2 Cor. 2. 17. *as many which corrupt* (or
deal deceitfully) *with the*
Word of God? But as of Sincerity, but as of
God, ſo ſpake he, in Chriſt. And beſide
his Pulpit-work, God made him more
extenſively uſeful in the Educating Young
Perſons for the *Sacred Office* of the *Miniſtry*,
at a Time when the *Harveſt was great*, and
Faithful *Labburers but few.* He has met
with good Succeſs that way; Some that
were under his Care, approved themſelves
to be *Able Miniſters* of the *New-Teſtament*,
have done their *Work* betimes, and are gone
to receive their *Crown.* Others have (moſt
of them) approved themſelves faithful,
and uſeful, and are Living Witneſſes of
his Soundneſs in the Faith, and the Care
he had upon him, that their *Judgments*
might be well inform'd in the great Fun-
damental Points of the Goſpel.

Thus, as he has *Fought the good Fight*, and
finiſhed his Courſe, ſo he has *kept the Faith.*
Should we not then acquieſce in Divine
Diſpoſals, ſince his Work was done? Eſpe-
cially when we have no Reaſon to doubt,
but we may add with the Apoſtle, *there*
was laid up for him a Crown of Righteouſneſs.

You then that were his *Flock*, and *you*
his ſurviving *Relatives*, weep not for him,
who is *entred* into the *Joy of his Lord*; but
rather improve the *Providence*, to quicken
your own Diligence in the Work that God
has given you to do. Be thankful, that ſo
deſirable

desirable a *Mercy* was so long lent; O and now he is gone, prepare to follow. Labour to *approve* your *Hearts* to God; make your *Calling* and *Election* sure. Now is your Working Season, the Night cometh when none can work. *Fight* the good *Fight* of *Faith*, and at length you'll lay hold of *Eternal Life*. *Be ye Stedfast, Immovable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know your Labour will not be in vain in the Lord.*

1. Tim. 6. 12.

1. Cor. 15. 58.

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